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KINGSBRIDGE RURAL
DISTRICT COUNCIL



REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1938

KINGSBRIDGE :

J. R. GILL & SON, LTD., "GAZETTE" OFFICE

Kingsbridge Rural District Council

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KINGSBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report OF THE *Medical Officer of Health* For the Year, 1938.

Medical Officer of Health : DR. W. C. SMALES, M.R.C.S.,
L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health : DR W. H. COWPER,
M.B., B.C.H., B.A.O.

Surveyor and Senior Sanitary Inspector : MR. N. C. HARRIS,
A.I.A.S., C.R.S.I.

Second Sanitary Inspector : MR. M. S. POWLING, C.R.S.I.,
Inspector of Meat and Foods.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MISS CALEY AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for the Year 1938

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area.—70,818 acres.

Population.—10,580.

Number of Inhabited Houses at the end of 1938, according to the Rate Book.—3,676.

Number of Unoccupied Houses.—168.

Rateable Value.—£52,528.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate.—£231.

The area is mainly an agricultural one, although on the coast line many of the inhabitants are employed in sea-faring pursuits.

There is an annual influx of visitors during the holiday season over the whole of the district, to which they are attracted by the favourable climate and the beauty of the surroundings.

The conditions of employment and environs are conducive to health and longevity.

VITAL STATISTICS

LIVE BIRTHS:

Legitimate :	Male	58	Female	72	Total	130
Illegitimate :	Male	4	Female	—	Total	4
		—		—		—
		62		72		134

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated resident population :—12.66.

STILL BIRTHS—Male. 4 ; Female, 2 ; Total, 6.

Rate per 1,000 of total (live and still) births.—42.85.

Deaths.—131.

Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population.—12.38.

Adjusted Death Rate.—9.53.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.—Nil.

Deaths from Puerperal Sepsis.—Nil.

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age. All Infants per 1,000 live births.—74.62.

Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births.—61.53.

Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births.—500.00.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages).—18.

Deaths from Measles (all ages).—Nil.

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages).—Nil.

Deaths from Diarrhœa (under two years of age).—Nil.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

There was little infectious disease in the Rural District during the year. The two cases of Diphtheria admitted to Swilly Hospital both recovered, but it was found necessary to detain one case in hospital for 72 days owing to persistent nasal discharge and multiple furunculosis.

Three cases of Scarlet Fever were admitted to the Isolation Hospital at Paignton.

One case of suspected Typhoid Fever was admitted to Hospital but proved negative.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING THE YEAR 1938

Diseases		Total Cases Notified	Cases Admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Smallpox	...	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	...	6	4	0
Diphtheria	...	2	2	0
Enteric Fever	...	0	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	0	0	0
Pneumonia	...	3	0	0
Chicken Pox	...	1	0	0
Erysipelas	...	0	0	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	1	0	0
Measles	...	1	0	0

Age Analysis	Scarlet Fever	Age Analysis	Diphtheria
Under 5 years	0	Under 5 years	2½
Under 10 years	6 and 8	Under 10 years	0
Under 15 years	12, 12½, 13, & 14½	Under 15 years	0
Under 20 years	0	Under 20 years	0
Under 25 years	0	Under 25 years	20

One case of Scarlet Fever was removed to Swilly Isolation Hospital and 3 cases to Paignton Hospital, at a total cost of £78. 12. 0.

The two cases of Diphtheria were admitted to the Swilly Hospital, at a cost of £57. 0. 0.

TUBERCULOSIS

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1938.

Age periods	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5 years	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 years	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
15—25 years	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
25—35 years	1	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
35—45 years	—	5	—	—	1	—	—	—
45—55 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 years and upwards	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	3	7	—	1	3	—	—	—

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

The Public Health Officers of the Authority are a Medical Officer of Health (also Medical Officer of Health of Plympton Rural District Council and Kingsbridge Urban District Council, and School Medical Inspector, Devon County Council).

Deputy Medical Officer of Health (occasional).

Two whole-time Sanitary Inspectors.

Laboratory Facilities are provided by the County Council for the examination of milk and water in addition to the usual bacteriological examinations.

Provision of Anti-Toxin.—Medical men practising in the district can obtain a free supply of anti-toxin. Material is also supplied for the immunization of children of the district against Diphtheria free of cost.

LIST OF PUBLIC VACCINATORS.

KINGSBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT.

Name of Parishes.	Name of Public Vaccinators.
Charleton, Aveton Gifford, Modbury, Bigbury, Kings- ton and Ringmore	... DR. W. H. COWPER, Kingsbridge.
Blackawton and Stoke Fleming	... DR. J. G. WARREN, Westbourne, Dartmouth.
Churchstow, South Milton, Thurlestone, W. Alvington, Buckland-tout-Saints, East Allington, Loddiswell, and Woodleigh	... DR. W. G. VERNIQUET, Barnfield, Kingsbridge.
Chivelstone, Sherford, Slapton, South Pool and Stokenham	... DR. W. H. SIMONDS, Chillington, Kingsbridge.
E. Portlemouth, Malborough and South Huish	... DR. D. O. TWINING, Salcombe.
Vaccination Officer: MR. H. SMITH.	

Nursing in the Home.—None provided by this Authority, but the County Council employ Health Visitors in the district. Some of the parishes employ a District Nurse, whose services are of the greatest value.

Midwives.—The Midwives Act is administered by the County Council. There are five practising midwives in the district.

Maternity and Child Welfare Centre.—There is a centre in Kingsbridge, which is open on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday in each month, and one at Slapton (monthly meeting, 1st Wednesday).

The attendance for the year was as follows :—

		Number of Openings	Mothers present	Infants present	Children 1 to 5 years
Kingsbridge	...	21	430	152	447
Slapton	...	12	70	30	47

The South Hams Cottage Hospital provides 16 beds for patients from Kingsbridge and the surrounding districts :—

Men's Ward	...	6 beds
Women's Ward	...	6 beds
Children's Cots	...	2
Private Wards	..	2 (one bed each)

It is supported by voluntary effort.

Patients were admitted from the various parishes as follows :—Aveton Gifford, 3; Bigbury, 1; Blackawton, 1; Buckland-tout-Saints, 3; Charleton, 1; Chivelstone, 6; Churchstow, 6; East Allington, 9; East Portlemouth, 2; Loddiswell, 8; Malborough, 15; Ringmore, 1; Salcombe, 24; Sherford, 8; Slapton, 8; South Milton, 3; South Pool, 2; Stokefleming, 1; Stokenham, 16; Thurlestone, 5; West Alvington, 2.

Isolation Hospital.—None in the district, but by arrangement with the Plymouth City Council, infectious cases requiring hospital treatment may be sent to Swilly Isolation Hospital, Plymouth. The Council have also an arrangement with the Paignton Urban District Council, by which infectious cases requiring hospital treatment can be sent to their Isolation Hospital.

The arrangements referred to are provisional only, pending the completion and adoption of a scheme under Section 63 of the Local Government Act, 1929, for the provision of hospital accommodation for this part of the Administrative County, and which scheme is in course of preparation.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water Supplies.—The parishes in the district are mainly supplied by public water supplies from local sources derived from wells and springs. Supplies were analysed during the year and some of them proved unsatisfactory. The prolonged period of dry weather during the summer has shown that these supplies are still far from adequate.

THE KINGSBRIDGE AND SALCOMBE WATER BOARD ACT, 1937

In 1936-37 session of Parliament, the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board successfully promoted a Bill to alter the constitution of the Board and to make the Kingsbridge Rural District Council a constituent authority and to authorise the construction of additional water works.

The chief works authorised by the Act were an intake and weir on the River Avon with a 9in. pipe line from it to the existing filter house, the doubling of the filtration plant and the subsidiary works, and additional pipe lines and reservoirs to meet the demands of the Kingsbridge Rural District.

For this purpose during the year the Board have increased the capacity of Blackdown reservoir from 200,000 to 750,000 gallons. This work which was completed during the year forms a valuable storage on the distribution system.

By this a water supply will be obtained for the contributory places within the Rural District which should prove sufficient to meet all demands for many years to come.

The Council in April, 1938, became a constituent authority of the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board and steps were immediately taken to construct additional waterworks throughout the district, the villages of West Alvington and South Milton taking precedence.

A number of improvements and extensions to water supplies have been carried out during the year.

Eastern Part of the District.—The water supplies to the villages of Strete, Stoke Fleming, Slapton and Blackawton are far from satisfactory and there have been many complaints of shortage.

A Ministry of Health Inquiry was held on 3rd August, 1938, into a scheme to augment the water supply of the village of Strete from springs at Hillaway. The scheme was not approved, and it was suggested that the Council should explore without delay the possibility of the extension of the mains of the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board with a view to the provision of a permanent and satisfactory supply of water for the parish of Strete and possibly other places en route or beyond.

The Supply at Stoke Fleming is also unsatisfactory both in quality and quantity and distribution is not good. Pumping has to be resorted to during the summer months in order to maintain the Supply and consumers have been advised to boil all drinking water. The Council have decided to instal a chlorinating plant to treat this supply as a temporary measure.

Shortage has also been experienced at Slapton during the summer months and pumping has to be done to maintain the supply.

The Council have had the water supply of Blackawton under consideration for some time, but have been unable to formulate a scheme for improving the local supply which is unsatisfactory.

They have, therefore, decided that the only satisfactory solution of this water problem is by the extension of the Moorland Supply as suggested by the Ministry of Health. A preliminary survey is now being undertaken and it is hoped that the extension will soon be under way.

ANALYSIS OF WATER SAMPLE. — Moorland Supply. Bala Brook

Place at which sampled :— Standpipe, Modbury.

REPORT.

Bacteriological.

Colonies growing on agar (2 days at 37°C) = 2 per ml.

" " (3 days at 22°C) = 32 per ml.

B. Coli present in — ml. Absent in 100 ml.

Probable number coli-aerogenes organisms per 100 c.c. = Nil.

Remarks.

This sample is satisfactory bacteriologically.

(Signed) T. LAWSON McEWAN,

County Bacteriologist.

Drainage and Sewerage.—Sewage disposal at Stoke Fleming was found to be unsatisfactory and the Council, on the advice of their consulting Engineers, have decided on a sea outfall. Plans are now being prepared.

The Sewage Disposal works and outfall at South Milton have also been found to be unsatisfactory and the matter is now under consideration.

The Sewerage and Sewage Disposal of the village of East Allington is most unsatisfactory and the Council have instructed their Consulting Engineers to prepare a scheme for submission to the Ministry of Health.

44 new drains were laid and tested during the year.

The systematic conversion of privy middens to pail closets or water closets is being carried out where found necessary.

Scavenging.—Scavenging of the whole of the district is now done by private contract. Difficulties have arisen, but the scheme appears to be working satisfactorily.

PARISH NOTES

Aveton Gifford.—There has been some shortage of water on the higher levels. This local supply will shortly be augmented by the Moorland Supply.

Chivelstone.—The question of providing an adequate water supply for East Prawle is still under consideration.

East Allington.—A scheme for dealing with the sewage of East Allington has been placed before the Council, and will be submitted to the Minister of Health in due course.

The water supply has been augmented by installing a pumping plant to pump water from a spring to the existing reservoir.

East Portlemouth.—The Council have had placed before them a scheme for the drainage of part of the village to abate a nuisance and it is hoped that the work will be carried out next year.

Malborough.—Owing to the very severe weather experienced in December, the vertical main from the water tower froze, bursting a large portion of this section of pipe, in spite of the fact that it was protected by wrapping, sawdust and woodwork. Steps were immediately taken to fix a by-pass from the delivery pipe of the rams to the 3" cast iron main, and this temporary arrangement supplied the village with water until repairs to the main were carried out.

South Milton.—It is hoped that this village will be supplied with water from the Moorland Scheme during the coming year.

Stokefleming.—The Council have under consideration new sewage outfall works for this village.

Stokenham.—To deal with a nuisance from the drainage of the Council Houses a scheme has been adopted for extending the public sewer. The work will be carried out next year.

A scheme for the drainage of the Beesands Council Houses has been approved by the Council and this will also be carried out next year.

West Alvington.—This village is now being supplied with water with a high pressure main from the Moorland Supply.

A new sewage installation has been installed and is working quite satisfactorily.

Shops and Offices.—It has not been found necessary to take action under the Shops Act 1934.

Camping Sites.—There were 15 camping sites in the area for which licences were granted during 1938 and approximately the same number of sites were occasionally used for camping purposes. The estimated maximum number of campers resident in the area over August Bank Holiday is 1500.

Smoke Abatement.—No action was taken under the above heading in the district.

Swimming Baths and Pools.—There are no public or privately owned swimming baths open to the public in the district.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.—It was unnecessary to take any action for the eradication of bed bugs.

Schools.—There are 19 Public Elementary Schools in the district.

During the year 35 notices were received referring to 195 children who were excluded from school because of communicable disease or because they were contacts.

They were as follows :

Whooping Cough	...	6
Scarlet Fever	...	1
Chicken Pox	...	33
Measles	...	149
Mumps	...	2
Ring Worm	...	1

The schools are visited occasionally by the Medical Officer of Health and by the Sanitary Inspector.

HOUSING

Considerable progress was made with a housing survey of the district, particulars of which are given below. So far eight parishes have been systematically inspected.

The Council are pressing on with their arrangements for the rehousing of the tenants who will be displaced following the demolition of houses subsequent to the last Slum Clearance Inquiry.

Housing (Rural Workers) Act, 1926.—To date 18 houses have been thoroughly reconditioned under the above Act, and there seems every possibility that during the next year this number will be very considerably increased.

Housing Statistics :

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :—

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| (1) | (a) | Total number of dwelling houses inspected for defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 226 |
| | (b) | Number of inspections made for the purpose | | | | | 330 |
| (2) | (a) | Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932 | ... | ... | ... | ... | Nil |
| | (b) | Number of inspections made for the purpose | | | | | Nil |

(3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	131
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	72
2.	Remedy of Defects during the year without Service of formal Notices :—	
	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers ...	21
3.	Action under Statutory Powers during the year ...	Nil

Housing Act, 1936 (Overcrowding).

The Council have still under consideration the re-housing, etc., of persons living in overcrowded dwellings. Properties are being measured under this Act in order that information may be inserted in the rent books of respective owners.

At the end of the year there were 13 cases of overcrowding in the district as compared with 24 cases when the original survey was made. It is improbable that there will be any further decrease in this number by natural adjustments, such as the marriage and departure from home of sons and daughters.

OVERCROWDING TABLE.

(a)	The number of Dwelling houses overcrowded at the year together with the number of families and the number of persons dwelling therein :—	
	Number of Dwelling houses overcrowded ...	13
	Number of families	13
	Total number of persons therein	92
(b)	The number of new cases of overcrowding reported ...	Nil
(c)	The number of cases of overcrowding relieved and the number of persons concerned :—	
	Number of Cases	1
	Number of Persons	5
	Cases relieved by Local Authority	Nil
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which Dwelling houses in respect of which the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding have again become overcrowded	Nil
(e)	Any other particulars with respect to conditions in relation to overcrowding which the Minister may from time to time require :—	
	Number of houses measured and recorded ...	71

There are two cases of serious overcrowding at Beesands. The Council propose erecting two houses in the vicinity of the present Council Houses to deal with this.

Building Progress : Number of Houses erected :

Without State assistance	...	...	26
With State assistance under Housing Acts	...	...	1
Number of Plans submitted	...	...	96
Number of Plans approved	...	...	95
Block Plans for layouts—Submitted	...	...	2
Approved	...	...	1

Water Connections.—Number of water connections made to public water supplies during the year.—62.

Modbury	...	11 (Moorland Supply)
Malborough	...	2
Beesands	...	1
Loddiswell	...	2 (1 Moorland Supply)
Stoke Fleming	...	3
West Alvington	...	40 (Moorland Supply)
Strete	...	3
		—
		62

Water Samples.—During the year 64 water samples were taken and submitted for bacteriological and chemical analysis; 33 of them proved satisfactory.

Petrol and Carbide Licences, Etc.—The following licences were issued or renewed during the year :

Petrol Licences	...	43
Carbide Licences	...	1
Explosive Licences	...	25

Offensive Trades.—There is only one offensive trade in the district— that of a fellmonger. No complaints have been received and the trade is well conducted.

Nuisances.—45 complaints were received of various nuisances, such as choked drains, improper disposal of waste water, insufficient sanitary accommodation, etc. All were abated following the service of informal notices.

Dairies and Cowsheds.—There were 273 dairies and cowsheds on the register at the beginning of the year, but towards the end of the year a comprehensive survey of all these premises was commenced.

Milk sampling has been carried out during the year on an unprecedented scale, 256 samples having been taken, of which 103 proved satisfactory, giving a percentage of 40.2 successful samples.

There are 28 Accredited producers and two Tuberculin Tested producers in the district. There is every prospect of a considerable increase in the number of Accredited producers during 1939.

The closest co-operation is maintained with the Staff of the Agricultural Committee of the County Council.

Food and Drugs Act, 1928.—This act is administered by the Police, and 17 samples were taken during the year, all of which proved genuine.

Bakehouses.—The 16 bakehouses in the district are inspected regularly and are found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

Slaughterhouses.—There are 21 slaughterhouses in the district where slaughterings are carried on regularly. Frequent inspections of these premises are made, and when it is found necessary, diseased meat is seized and destroyed. There is still a considerable amount of occasional slaughtering carried on in the district, but notification of slaughtering is duly received from the persons concerned.

During the routine inspection of slaughterings, approximately 1,000lbs. of diseased meat was seized.

There are 57 licensed slaughtermen in the district.

There are 15 butchers' shops in the district, all of which are kept in a clean condition, are provided with glass fronts and have adequate cooling chambers. 188 inspections of shops and places where food is prepared have been made.

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)	150	650	85	2500	2000
Number inspected ...	19	83	15	243	290

All Diseases except Tuberculosis

Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned ...	—	3	—	3	3
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuber- culosis ...	—	3.6%	—	1.2%	1.0%

Tuberculosis only

Whole carcasses condemned	1	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned ...	—	1	—	—	3
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis ...	5.3%	1.2%	—	—	1.0%

I am,

Your obedient servant,

W. C. SMALES,

June, 1939.

Medical Officer of Health.

